

THE
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LAURIE SULLIVAN EDITOR

ALLAN HUNTER ADVISOR

Woodcut by Richard Wagner

# **JUDGES**

ALLAN HUNTER
FRAN MACPHERSON -KOHAK
WILLIAM LITTLEFIELD
RONALD WARNERS
WILLIAM RUSSO

# **CONTEST WINNERS**

# **FICTION**

FIRST PRIZE: ANONYMOUS
SECOND PRIZE: TONY WALLACE

#### ART

FIRST PRIZE: ELYSE KULE
SECOND PRIZE: RICHARD WAGNER

# **PHOTOGRAPHY**

FIRST PRIZE: ELYSE KULE

# POETRY

FIRST PRIZE: LISA MATURO SECOND PRIZE: CATHY LANE

# **HONORABLE MENTIONS:**

DEEDEE GRIGNAFFINI LISA MATURO ROBIN-ANNE PULIT KIMBERLY RASMUS REBECCA ROWE LAURIE SULLIVAN by Anonymous

Ethan knew how to smoke a cigarette. There was no question that he was a master. He would sit down at the counter of Millener's, strike a silent match and turn all other cigarettes in the room into rolls of clay in the mouths of young and old men and brooding women. A blonde throaty voice would come over the radio and the Viceroy would lower a bit--an elbow on the bar and two brown shoes on the support of his bar stool as he listened to news that came over the radio; he would glance upwards with just his eyes, at the glowing RCA. There was no help for it-- the news-- as he looked down once more, blowing through clenched teeth, jaw thrust slightly forward. The blonde voice fell again after a piano; down from the set, over the bottles and cash register, rolling over the bar and spreading softly through ears and minds. And Ethan could hear his mother or sister, or maybe a girl in a wide wool skirt, none of whom he had seen for a long while. Then he might put both hands in his coat pockets removing them only to tap his cigarette in an ashtray and take a sip of White Horse scotch. A jazz tune came next and then he rolled his cigarette a bit in his mouth, and tapped it more frequently in the ashtray. There was no real change in his style of course. Such a thing that comes from the soul doesn't change with the sounds played over an RCA radio.

I was his very good friend, and I sat next to him at Millener's. I smoked too, and I drank whiskey. It was Lucky Strikes that I smoked, and Dewar's whiskey that I drank. I am not an imitator and would not have sat with him as a friend if I was. Still, whenever we both had a cigarette in our mouths, I could not help but feel that my sense of timing was all off, and that, occasionally, I appeared an utter fool. Of course he never really acknowledged the existence of cigarettes. I never once heard him say the word. From the ashtray to my mouth, I did all I could to keep him unaware of their existence.

He smoked a pack and a half a day of Viceroy cigarettes. Sometimes in Millener's a young man might pull out a box of Dunhill's, and after carefully sliding a single stick out of the case, he would light it with a Ronson lighter and smoke with

almost effeminate gestures. This isn't any one young man I'm talking about. There are scores of this type walking around any city, treating each cigarette--if they are foreign made--as a treasure; like a cigar.

Ethan smoked American cigarettes, and not in an attempt to be simple or down to earth, like those rich men who drive VW bugs. And in the morning he would have half a pack left, sitting there on his bedside table along with a tin ashtray. In the ashtray the number of cigarette butts was always different, but they were always the same length and they were crushed out. I don't know why the number of butts was always different. I went to his house on consecutive days and from one day to the next the number of them had tripled, without his having smoked more than half a pack, and most of those out of his room; in this way he was very mysterious. There was no explanation and I didn't ask for one. Not wishing, as I have said. to bring to his attention the existence of cigarettes as anything separate from himself. There were a few things, in fact, that he regarded as separate from himself. The RCA radio and the blonde voice might be two of them, along with myself and anyone he cared for.

Buicks are big cars that require a lot of space to brake. Four feet--the length of one particular skid mark, is not enough space to do it; so he lives with his uncle who is unmarried. His father had left long before, and then on one summer afternoon his mother lived five minutes longer than his sister; long enough for an ambulance to arrive, its doors to be opened. She placed on a stretcher, doors shut. Siren starts again, it turns a corner, drives three blocks around cars that have pulled over to the side of the street, and then she dies. I can see the ambulance driver nodding to the medics, turning off the siren and slowing to a normal safe city speed, winding his way back to the hospital. So the cigarette lowered a bit when the blonde came in again.

There were people that Ethan liked and people that he didn't notice. He never learned to like anyone. The girl that walked into the restaurant had blonde hair, but not like an actress. It was hair that might have been salty if you had tasted it; it was blown but not wind swept. He breathed in sharply and

UNTITLED by Lisa Maturo

Bursting rememberances
and tattering sheets
Shoveling wafers of
bristling reeps

Careful tickings of
mismorning's thoughts
Crouching ticklers
giggling to bits

Can't seem to find the big guys, the sun's in my eyes.

SECOND PRIZE

People Take Steps by Cathy Lane

You have walked on me many times taken me for granted forgotten that I see what you do I have always been there for you listened to your troubles caught your tears and echoed your laughter but over time you have worn me down

after having noticed her looked away guickly. That was it. He probably loved her. So he looked away guickly; things like that don't work both ways; not really. In fact the girl met a young man there, who after ordering a whiskey and soda, took out a pack of Dunhill's. The girl accepted one but both Ethan and I knew it was out of character for her. Nevertheless, she never once looked over in our direction. We left a few minutes after they did. The young man escorted her down the street, one hand in his pocket, the other wrapped around her for a bit, and then two hands in his pocket; but she still laughed at his jokes. After they had walked for a bit, he hailed a cab and she got in afterwhich Ethan settled into a faster pace, both hands in his pockets walking alone down the street and stopping in a corner drugstore. I doubt if he thought at all about the wool skirt. Maybe he thought about the way it fit her in particular, but it's something other than that that's important.



Photo by Elyse Kule FIRST PRIZE

#### HONORABLE MENTION

NEVER KNOWING by DeeDee Grignaffini (a Chinese Fu)

What should she tell them?
She's their mother, she can not lie.
She hears the sobs of her weeping children,
Not knowing why he had to die.
Maybe he's not dead at all-Just another "Missing in Action."

Daddy, where's my daddy?

Mommy, why won't he come home?

Daddy, I need you daddy!

Mommy, what's Vietnam?

What is Vietnam? What is death?

A senseless torturous affair,
No one knows exactly why.
Maybe time will bring peace to the world...
There will be no peace for
Daddy's little girl.

(Evidence found--

His plane went down--Still not a trace of the bodies.)

Hopes and dreams,
Anxiety streams 'cross the little girl's face...
But alas, no Daddy.
"Missing in action."

(Corruption steals throughout the night--Universe, Time, Eneregy--)

> Daddy, I'm sweet sixteen today, But sixteen isn't so sweet while you're--"Missing in action."

Talk,
Talk,
Hearsay,
Is it true?

The Vietnamese government
concealing, hiding, lying--Why?
(There are 1850 persons Missing in Action
A possible 10% are alive)
Bodies on top of bodies-Magots eating at flesh and bone.
Hidden waste, hidden destruction.

(says Mom)

Baby it's about time you knew;

You see--

President Kennedy knew what was best, or so he thought.
It became the third and final stage of the war as the military was sent in to intervene.
He sent all the sons and brothers, and yes, my child, he sent your daddy.
There is no one reason known as to this rash decision, Your daddy had to go.

Your daddy was a hero.

Dead or alive may not yet be known, Baby--your daddy's not coming home.

A liar.

A beggar, A thief.

Knowing not of our sadness,
Nguyen Can insists-No bodies, no captives... No history.

A mind game,

Played by our government.
The American government,
Demoralizing, torturing, creating-A never ending nightmare.

#### HONORABLE MENTION

AGAINST WAR
by Kimberly Rasmus

The subject of war is something
that I never will understand.

I'll never believe that anything good
could ever come out of it.

Who the good....who the bad?
Who the right....who the wrong?

than human life.

We are all equal.

Inside....we are all the same.

Every soldier

was someone's son.

He lived inside his mother.

He might be a husband.

He could have brothers and sisters.

He might even have a son himself.

Hang your heads low America.
History--History of senseless slaughter.
A cow. a mother.

Mother and child,
Starving, dving, screaming:

"Feed our children,

Starve the WAR!" \*\*

History in the past

Ignorant and blind:

Feed the war.

Starve our children!

A generation--starving, wanting, needing...

Human anguish--

Not knowing whether a loved one is-DEAD or ALIVE.

\*\* "Feed our children, starve the war" A quote taken from <u>Time Life</u> History and War.

#### HONORABLE MENTION

GO HOME by Rebecca Rowe

tired, sleepy, worn out
homeward bound
time to go somewhere old
to pleasant sounds.

Happy faces
missed places
friends of long
together again

leaving new for old
bringing home
something different
me full grown

Hoping the old
is the same
knowing it is not
but going just the same

The wife

living at home.

Each day, waiting to hear word

if her husband is alive.

Whether to mourn or rejoice,

Her love, her life, her husband.

To murder her reason for being,

her reason for caring for loving....

that's the real crime.

Both friend and enemy

are loved.

When killed,

are mourned just the same.

The same agony.

The same loss.

The same despair.

The same tears shed.

It doesn't matter

Which side they were on.

In ancient times,

with sticks and stones.

Now,

with guns and bombs.

Tomorrow,

with nuclear weapons and the unknown.

Death on the battlefield.

Bodies with blood splattered over them.

Torn limbs.

Faces distorted with unfathomable pain.

Their human lives ending,

pouring from their wounds....

Victory?



Photo by Shirley Richardson

by Tony Wallace

He stepped out onto the sidewalk. The small stones crunched under his shoes. The sun was bright and made him squint and his eyes burn. The white of the snow enhanced his pain and his eyes blinked uncontrollably. All he had on were jeans, black shoes and a spring jacket. The fog poured from his mouth as he enjoyed every bit of the fresh air. He counted the twenty dollars they gave him for his 'new start;' the bills were old and wrinkled. He started to walk away from where he had lived for three years and a surge of excitement ran through him. He started walking faster and his feet sounded like those of a woman in high heels walking down a hospital corridor. After a while the walk wasn't cleared and he began to walk through snow that climbed down inside his shoes and he could feel the snow seep in.

His eyes had adjusted and he watched the snow pass under him at a steady pace. Downtown was about six miles, about a two-hour walk. The cold hit him all at once and he thought of a warm bed and oatmeal served daily at 7:00 a.m. without fail. Maybe it wasn't so bad. It was warm and the conversation was good. He turned and could no longer see the fence on the towers and he felt scared. A car passed. He stuck out his thumb. The car kept going, splashing slush onto his pant leg. He thought what a strange looking car, very small, but powerful. He had a Chevy he thought, "or do I." He had a girl too, but he hadn't heard from her in a year. She used to come see him. The cold bit his nose. Maybe she'll still be around. Maybe she has my car. He sniffled twice. "I wonder how the boys are? It was awful for them to come to see me, but I would have come for them." His ears were stinging, a truck headed towards him. He stuck out his thumb and the eighteen wheeler pulled over; the breaks hissing and metal grinding. He hopped up and in. He had lost a lot of weight and his 5' 9" build slipped in easy, his arms were strong from hard work. His hair was cold and stiff and he shook it loose like a dog; it flopped loosely on his face. The driver gave him a sturdy look. His chin, dimpled and hard, didn't move when he asked, "Where to?" He was so cold he couldn't answer without twisting his lips around and finally let loose with "the bus station, nex' town" all in one

word. The driver was very large and had on a fleece lined denim jacket, waist high and dirty near the pockets and buttons. His legs were the size of a living room lamp shade and his jeans clung on tightly, ready to burst. He threw the gears around like it was second nature. Neither one spoke. They pulled into town at the station. He said "thanks" and jumped down, his long brown hair flapped back as he did it all in one motion. He rezipped his jacket and went to check the schedule. The next bus was in the morning, much to his disappointment. The sun was down now and he was starting to hear his stomach rumble. His daily routine had been thrown off. He looked for a cafe. He went to the S&S Deli, a small restaurant and lounge. He opened the door; a little bell ting-a-linged. The waitress and all the customers looked up at him. They all knew as soon as they saw him where he had just come from. He felt he could pull it off and just be cool, but his hands shook. Ten eyes burned his every inch of flesh. He needed six dollars for the bus and probably ten for the room. That left four from what the state had given him for his new start. He looked up at the menu, it was cheap but left no margin for error. He ordered a hamburger, fries and a coffee to go. He'd rather eat outside in the cold than try to eat with five rednecks staring at him.

The rooming house was just down the street. It was a huge victorian, white, and needing paint everywhere. The door was red. He knocked. An old black man answered. A victim of the system himself, made no hesitation to ask him in immediately. His old body bent, his leg twisted and a look of a lot of abuse in his eye, the old man offered him coffee and warmth by the fire. He refused and paid eight dollars for the bed. It was a real bed, wooden frame, high headboard, covered with designs, like that of a bed at Grandma's house. It creaked as he lay on it, but it was a healthy creak not like the steel springs of his 'ex-residence.' Six o'clock came early he thought, he had lost track of the time by now. He had counted days, hours nad months for three years, sometimes seconds when the screws were in bad moods.

He woke up in the same position. The trucks and cars beeped by, the sun came in the windows. His back had a kink in it. The bed was too soft. He looked over at the station. His

bus was there. "New York City" the sign read. He ran down the stairs, into the street. It was a lot warmer than the day before. He bought his ticket and sat on the seat near the back of the bus. The bus idled and sat for what seemed an eternity. He wiggled in his seat with anticipation. Thoughts of people he hadn't seen since high school, never mind for three years. popped in and out of his head. Finally, the driver jumped on and the door closed, the air brakes let loose and it started to roll. He watched the houses and store fronts fly by and shifted down in his seat to get comfortable. It hit him. What was he going to do? Will anyone be there? Where was he going to live? He wanted to cry. "No, I'll be all right." He closed his eyes. He woke up to loud noises all muffled into one. Only the smell hit his nose and burned it. He rose in his seat to see the hustle and bustle. He hesitated, then rose slowly. He stepped down. People bumped him as he walked onto Broadway.

He walked into *Charlie's*. There was a new bartender. It was crowded for this early. A beer, he wanted a beer so badly. Oh it would taste so good. He flopped a dollar down and asked for a 'Bud.' The bartender coldly slapped it down and said, "Three bucks." He had it, but that was all he had. Oh well, it's a beer. He sipped it slowly at first, the bubbles tickled his nose. The oats and barley bit his tongue. He released an 'aaah' after each sip, a grin on his face, like a child hugging his mother after receiving a special gift.

On his left was a drunk asleep on the bar, on his right a woman, obviously troubled or an alcoholic. She had a tough face, stringy hair. But he thought, "give her a shower, some make-up and a dress, she'd be okay." He thought how long it had been since he had touched a woman. The softness they can give, the maternal hug when chips are down and the love they can make. Her pants were tight, she had nice legs and boots on her feet. Her jeans and boots were inexpensive but fit nicely. Her butt looked a bit large sittiing on the stool, like maybe she had had kids already. Her torso was small but her arms, powerful at the forearms where her sweater was bunched up, allowed her skin to be analyzed by the desparate man. Her bust was full and he realized he had been staring at her for an unknown length of time. He quickly snapped his head away and she smiled and sucked on her cigarette. He asked her for

one, and she smiled and handed him a menthol. It didn't matter. Where he just came from you smoke what you can get. They made it to the sidewalk and she slipped a little. He caught her. They kissed, nothing intense, just a peck. They ran upstairs like two high school kids running into the woods to be alone. Inside she went to the bathroom; he looked around. It was dingy, but nice and homey. The living room was small, it had a chair and a couch, both torn on the arms. The coffee table was small and had rings on it from drinks. The kitchen was very small and the rubbish, which needed emptying, was filled with mostly beer cans. She came out of the bathroom and they kissed again, this time passionately. They walked toward the bed and stood at the end. He was so excited he thought his whole body would explode. Her lips were full and experienced. Kissing was better than he remembered it. Everything was soft and wet and he started to put her on the bed. They missed and hit the floor.

His eyes opened. It was cold and lonely. His cot was bare. He was on the floor with his blanket. His cell mate stared at him. It was almost morning. He was embarrassed but both had experienced the same. He crawled back onto the cot with his blanket wrapped around him like a cocoon. He prayed that he could get her back in his dream and pick up where they had left off.

#### WHITE WALL by Rebecca Rowe

"The walls are white," said he as he walked out into a world of color, the trees are rough and brown and grass, blue-green and tall to hide the flowers gold and pink. Sunbeams shine down on streets of tar and stone, some birds sing now. Most cry though by and hi they will change under their trees to go once more inside.

#### HONORABLE MENTION

TIME

by Laurie Sullivan

Time and time again I look out my window And try not to see the end Of the rainbow. Ashes are all that's left And I scatter the remains. I wonder where to go And just what to do. We said goodbye last night To one another And I'm all alone Feeling cold and out on my own. Time passes by Easing the pain And slowly I gather In my remains. But time after time I look behind me Reaching out for my past Knowing it's gone forever And still longing for you. And time hating time. Time pulling time. Time needing time. Time spent loving you. Time drags me forward Yet pulls me back. I'm torn between Time past and time now. So I look out my window I search my heart And try not to see The rainbow's end of time.



Art by Richard Wagner

#### HONORABLE MENTION

# HONORABLE MENTION

CROCUS-CROWN QUEEN by Lisa Maturo

Blood-caked eyes crakling in the firey night

Calling streets in the midnight heat

Over boiling welts of a nightless sleep

Broadened year light passing lazily to bleak

Overwraught sun downsgrouch from the mossy peaks

Light days ahead to the airborne fleet

Hickory hinds of barking blasts Carried over from the hounding of the last

Crocus-Crown Queen bewithered under all that sheen These are the killing hours
Soaking and heaving every tired burden

I can't imagine your eyes, but your hidden smile seeps through my mind

You have to come to me now--I have no power left

You've drained all the shining wealth I own



Photo by Elyse Kule

ONE FLAMING NIGHT by Lisa Maturo

It's not the night that makes your beauty precious.

It's more the way the moon shoots my psyche into whirls of passion.

It's not the flickering flame of my candle fogging the window that makes me lonely for you.

Don't ask me what it is that makes my world a melt--I don't know myself (too well)

But it's definately not the magical dust of snow drifting past my window to remind me of the hellish peace of solitude. TO TIM
by Lisa Maturo

You don't need to bleed me anymore.
My shortness of breath has receded to a deeper gasp of tolerance.

Arched partings really don't suit me well, but the sun's beating on my leather skin heart

l'Il paint on a smile before I see you. Just to get us through the pondered pleats

Keep in touch because your unkempt coolness is so flakey,

I'll keep reminding myself to shed my tears and unlock my fears every time I splash down the shimmering street.



Photo by Ray Marfino

UNTITLED by Lisa Maturo

Vague intensities are driving me mad.
Things I know without knowing

Try, try to brush
off my psyche and
go on with my
yodling existence

Shelf of horrors for my shit-pan possessions.

(I sweep my insides under the rug before they come home)

#### HONORABLE MENTION

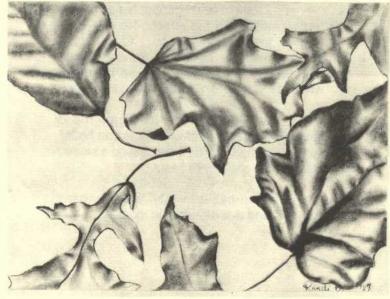
TUG OF WAR by Robin-Anne Pulit

I am the rope In a game of tug Strectched taught Jerked one way by you Then the other by him Tensed to a standstill Neither side winning Each side losing Stress in my fibers Cause threads to fray back I break down and get thinner Till I'm only a string One more pull; one more jerk I snap; It's over, With both left holding Only half.

UNTITLED by Laurie Sullivan

Fleeting
Here and gone
Just passing through
Only for a moment
Never for long
Never staying

It flickers
Fighting for existence
Hesitating
One wrong word
It dies in the ashes
Of what never was



Art by Randi Birnbaum

BEAUTY

by Mary Indy Okoye

I watch her from a distance, so graceful I can see. The most beautiful woman that I know and as humble as can be.

She lends a helping hand when she can and gives others a chance, not to prove they're good enough, but to show she understands.

I look at her. I gaze at her. I admire her poise and confidence, and her total honesty. The love she has inside is enough to love the whole world and more beside. She puts others before herself and caters to their need, and when they fall, she falls, because she loved indeed.

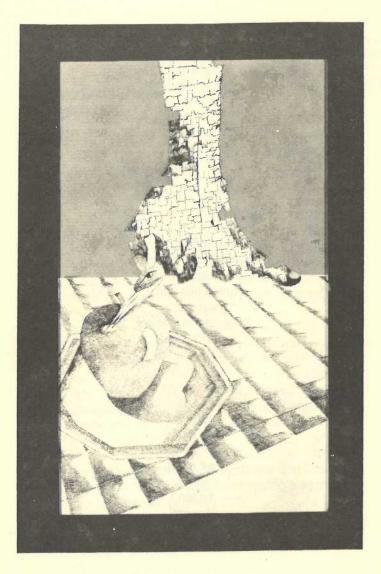
I stare at her. I gaze at her as I watch her walking down the street. No one even turns to look, no one but me. Only I stand and stare at her as if in a trance. Some people ask why I think she's so beautiful, when she can't even hold a second glance.

Just tell me one thing, my friend said once, one thing of which she can boast. I smiled a little smile as if concealing a secret, but with all seriousness I said,

"She has a beauty, one you can't see, the kind that matters the most."

BUS STATION by Rebecca Rowe

lines. people. dirt. blue haze. voices resound echo the places (fi - te - nutes - to - depar for - newyork - gate - nineeee ) we wish to go. baggage at our side, coins click. machines iingle. pop drops. baggage in and out. candy now. friends finding. people going, telephone calls. lines of people. some in. most going... parting, we must. leave. so long. farewell. old. hound.



Art by Elyse Kule FIRST PRIZE



Art, Woodcut by Richard Wagner SECOND PRIZE

#### THE RESTLESS REASON

by Jeff Desjarlais

Steve grabbed the clipboard from the front seat of the van and started.

"O.K. Listen up. Roll Call. Callahan, Thomas."

"Yeah?"

"Johanson, Amy."

"What?"

"King, Jackson."

"Here Dude."

"Martin, Andy."

"Just like last time."

"Napolo, Tony."

"Why do you always do roll call man? Jesus, there's only six of us for Christ's sake. I feel like I'm in the freakin' army or somethin'."

Steve always dreaded getting to Tony's name simply because he always questioned Steve, even if he agreed with him, which wasn't often.

"I will assume then that you are here Napolo?"

"Yes Sir, Captain Sir!!"

The others laughed, Steve continued.

"Sullivan, Debbie."

"Yes Captain," she giggled. Steve looked up from the clipboard and glared at her. He knew that was all it would take.

"All right. Today we are scheduled to hike Yosemite National Park. It's going to to be pretty cold up there, bring some warm clothes so you can put some layers on. Problems, questions, concerns?? O.K., lets go."

Steve knew that the group was getting a little uneasy. They had been traveling for about two weeks all over the North Western part of the country, and he was beginning to wonder how good an idea this trip really was.

Steve had been an Outward Bound guide for years when a social worker friend of his from college came up with this proposal to take troubled inner city kids out to the country. He had never been a social activist, signed a couple "Save The Whales" petitions, but nothing major. Somehow, though, he felt an odd sense of duty, or guilt, he wasn't sure which.

So here he was with a van load of kids and the knowledge that if the trip was successful the program would receive substantial financial support from local, and hopefully National agencies. It had gone fairly well despite the antics of a few of his more "troubled" teens, but Steve was confident that he could handle the group, especially if he tired them out on this hike.

"We'll be at the park in about twenty minutes, so just sit tight and keep your hands in the windows."

"Yeah, an yo ass too, Wop-face!" Jackson yelled at Tony, referring to his consistant practice of flashing moons to any female passers-by who appeared to be younger than eighty.

"Look black boy, you just jealous cause I got a nicer ass than you!"

"Give me a break Napolo," Amy said, "If you got a better ass than Jackson, my mothers a virgin!"

"If he's got a nicer ass than Jackson, you're a virgin," Debbie said kissing Tony.

Steve never knew how to handle this type of talk. It happened all the time, and he should have been used to it. But every time it started he got flustered, frustrated, and insecure, all at the same time. He thought he'd try the "We're all adults" approach.

"Hey look, I'm not a babysitter here. Do we really need this type of behavior??"

"What you mean We??" Once again Napolo got the best of him, and every one knew it. He had had trouble with Tony right from the start. It was bad enough that Debbie and Amy were racing to see who could lose their virginity, and Jackson and Martin had mini-race riots, but if he lost control of Tony, he would lose the whole group.

"I want to speak to you later Napolo." Steve hoped that the touch of authority might quiet them down for a few minutes, and he was right. By the time they got to Yosemite, the group realized the beauty of where they were long enough to enjoy themselves.

"It's beautiful. It really is beautiful." Debbie had been amazed at almost everything they had seen on the trip, and she was very impressed by Steve's knowledge of nature. She would talk to him about trees, animals, shrubs, anything. She always seemed to be the most interested in the actual learning that was going on, so naturally Steve was upset and somewhat hurt when she started going after Tony. He kept telling himself it was for professional reasons that he felt this way, it couldn't be because he was attracted to her. He wouldn't allow it. Would he?

"Steve, how come it snows up there when it's August down here?" Debbie inquired.

"It's just the altitude difference. The higher you get the colder the atmosphere gets, so if there's any moisture in the air it will cause it to crystallize in the form of snow."

"Man you are weird. Smart, but weird." Jackson punched Steve in the shoulder jokingly, and for the first time, he began to feel that maybe this was going to work.

They started from the bottom of the trail at about 9:00 a.m. Steve had estimated that by 1:00 they would be about half way up at about six thousand feet or so, where they could turn around and return safely. However, he didn't take the snow into account.

By 11:00 they were walking in two inches of it and Steve stopped the group for a change of clothes and a bite to eat.

"Christ I'm cold. Any body got an extra sweater??"

"Here Amy. This'll fit you." Jackson tossed a sweater that Amy embraced with grattitude.

Steve was concerned about the weather. He hadn't heard anything about a snow storm, or anything about snow for that matter. He was just deciding that maybe they could head back when Tony came over with a Budweiser in his hand.

"Napolo, where did you get that!!"

"From my pack." Tony popped the tab and took a large gulp. The rest of the frigid group watched in anticipation.

"Tony, give me that beer. You know you can't have that. There's no drinking on this trip." Steve's breath curled upward ironically like smoke from a joint.

"Says who?? You? What you gonna do, call my mutha from a phone tree??" Debbie giggled.

"Look," Steve was calm, "you know the rules. First of all there are a few things we can't have on this trip. Smoking and drinking happen to be a couple of them. Secondly, you shouldn't be drinking liquids, especially alcohol, especially when it's cold out. You'll cramp, and lose body heat and there is always the outside chance of hypothermia."

Tony was shocked with this logical reply. He couldn't deal with Steve's superior knowledge. No matter how many times he cut Steve down, he couldn't deny the fact that Steve knew what he was doing, and that pissed him off.

"You want it? Here." Tony hurled the can towards Steve hitting him in the chest and causing the liquid to pour down his pants.

"What the hell did you do that for??" Jackson stood up and moved towards Tony.

"Come on! He wanted the beer so I gave it to him, all right?" Tony walked away and sat next to Debbie.

"Jackson, just cool the liberal self-righteous nigger shit will ya. You're last name goes to your head sometimes."

It was Andy. Silent most of the time, but he had been blatant about his racial preferences since day one. Jackson whipped around and headed for Martin. Andy tripped in the snow and toppled under Jackson's tackle. Steve looked up from his soaked pants to see the first of King's blows hit home.

"Jesus you two!" Steve rushed to the fray and pushed Jackson off.

"What the hell are you doing Jackson? We aren't in an alley." Jackson moved away, the falling snow sticking to the top of his hair like dust.

"Yeah, I try to help you out and you shit on me. Napolo's right, man, you are an asshole."

Steve was hurt. He knew he had lost his support from Jackson. He hadn't meant to be ungrateful. Actually it was the first time that some one in the group had stuck up for him. He was grateful, but he couldn't tolerate fighting.

"I'm still cold. I don't care about hypoglycemia or whatever, I'm thirsty too."

"O.K. Amy, we'll finish eating and then head back down."

Steve knew this was the best thing to do. He hadn't realized that exhaustion might lead to short tempers as well.

"Big hiker man gonna call it quits cause of a little snow??" Tony looked up at Steve, waiting for a reply.

"Yeah, it snows in the city too ya know." Tom said.

Steve couldn't believe he was being questioned. Even though they might not have agreed, they had always respected his decisions.

"Look the weather is just going to get worse before it gets better. Our best bet is to head back down."

"I kinda agree with Callahan." Andy said as the blood from his lip started to dry. "We're only here once in a lifetime. What the hell?? Let's go for another hour or so then head back.??"

The rest of the group agreed, except for Amy. So against his better judgement they continued. Steve didn't understand why he was pushed that way by Tony. He knew they should return immediately, but Tony's remark had done more damage than any punch Jackson could have thrown. He had to prove to Tony that he could keep climbing.

By 12:30 they were walking in five inches of snow. Steve's second pair of pants had soaked through, and the wind had picked up. Steve stopped the group and decided to wait for the snow to stop and build a shelter.

"Why don't we just walk back?" Callahan was getting nervous. He knew that Steve was right the first time, but he had been pushed into goading Steve, just as Andy had been. Napolo had done it again.

"Listen to me this time. The trail has been wiped out by snow. With this wind it's just going to make it harder to see where to go. If we leave now, we'll be walking around blind. We should just make a shelter and build a fire. When the weather breaks we'll head back down."

"You're crazy!!" screamed Callahan. "How can we stay here?? We'll freeze. I'm not staying. I'm going back." Callahan started to walk past the group when Jackson stopped him.

"Look man you are from the city. You don't know what the hell you are doing out here."

"Don't push me King. I'm leaving. All right. I'll see you when I'm at the bottom in front of a fire in the main lodge." He started to walk down the mountain.

"Stop him Steve!! He won't last out there, you know that." Amy was pleading. She was scared now.

"He's not going to listen to me. We have to stay together. If any of us left to get him they'd be just as stupid as he is." Steve moved to a pine tree and started cutting some branches. Jackson walked over to the tree.

"Can I help?"

"Sure, just take these over to those rock ledges over there. Clear the snow from the ground and pile it on top of the boughs."

"What are you gonna do about Callahan?"

It was Tony now. He was no longer looking at Steve as some authority figure who might know what to do. He was blaming Tom's departure on Steve.

"What the hell do you want me to do Napolo?? Run after him like a fool. Don't you think that's your job as of late?"

"Look Steve, you got us into this mess. It's your fault, do something."

"Leave him alone Tony. He is trying to help us O.K.?" It was Debbie, her hair frozen from the snow, made the locks fall on her forehead like miniature pitchforks. "Just help out or something." Tony left. Steve smiled at Debbie, and wondered.

When they had finally finished the shelter it was 4:30. He thought of Callahan. He was probably sitting in front of the fireplace in the lodge, drinking a coke and laughing his ass off. He took what little food was left and passed it out evenly. He

was hoping the snow would stop by 6:30 and maybe give them a full moon to walk down by, but by 7:00 the wind was still blowing and the snow kept coming.

"Hey man. I'm worried about Amy I think she passed out or somethin" It was Jackson.

"Her pupils are dialated. Her pulse is low. We got to get her out of here." Steve was thinking out loud. He knew they couldn't do anything until the storm broke. But it was too late. Andy had heard them.

"You shouldn't have let the nigger take care of her. That was your first mistake."

"Your momma's first mistake was learning how to screw!!"

"Shut up Jackson, Martin. We got a problem here. Put your differences aside and help out for once will you." Steve held Jackson's wrist and looked up to see, for the first time, the hate and anger inside his eyes. Steve continued in a soft soothing tone. "Just stay with Amy, O.K.?"

"You spend an awful lot of time with that bitch, Buholwicz. Hell of a lot more time than you did with Callahan." Tony had stirred from under his blanket. He had been silent until Debbie had apologized for snapping at him. It seemed to have revived his ego.

"I don't care who the hell you think you are Napolo, but I'm in charge here, and with that responsibility comes respect, I demand it. If you ever call me by my last name again...." Steve was losing control. Everyone knew it, and Tony loved it.

"You'll do what, Buholwicz??" Tony knew Steve too well. He knew he was too concerned with Amy to waste his energy fighting. He also knew that the job meant too much to Steve to throw it all away.

"Don't push it, Tony." He went back to Amy and Jackson. "Get an extra blanket from my pack. Wrap her up tight

and sleep on top of her for insulation. I think we should try to get some rest. When this breaks we'll head back down.

He laid down under the branches and fell asleep.

"Wake up. It's Amy." Steve stirred slowly from his sheltered slumber. The grainy remainders of sleep irritated his still wakening eyes. It was Tony. He looked drawn and white.

"She's dead." Steve sat up and crawled to Amy. He tried her pulse. Nothing. He grabbed her by the neck and tried C.P.R. He struggled to give her his breath until he realized it was futile.

"She's dead, Steve." Debbie started to cry. He had destroyed her faith. He had failed. It hurt him more to see Debbie cry then to see Amy dead.

"What now MR. Responsibility?" Tony moved towards. Steve.

Put your I

"Well, we should build a stretcher and take her down the mountain with us....."

Tony pushed him, screaming, "She's dead. Did you hear me, she's dead!! For all we know Tom is dead too. What the hell are you gonna do, take roll call by our last names first to see whose dead or not??!!"

Tony was standing over him now. Steve could feel the patience run from his body like sweat. He stood up, "I'm as upset as you are about Amy, but there is nothing we can do now. Callahan left on his own free will. No one made him leave. He left because he wanted to."

"Bull Shit" Andy had moved in from behind. "You made him leave. You didn't stop him. You knew he wouldn't last, so you just let him go to get him out of your hair.!!!"

Steve was sandwiched between both of them now. The accusations continued.

"You never gave a damn about us. You just wanted to get your points in with your buddies at the agency. Who cares if you kill a few of us on the way!!"

Steve was being pushed by both of them now, while Jackson just stared at the empty shell of Amy's corpse.

"That's not true. You know it. He just left. No one knew about the storm. How could I have known??"

Debbie rushed him and pushed him to the ground. Steve fell easily, more from shock than from force. "I hate you!! You killed her!! I hate you!! She hit him on the chest repeatedly until he threw her aside just in time to catch a left from Napolo.

Steve lay on the ground for a second waiting for his response. He knew it was over. He knew the job was over. He knew the trip was over, and for the first time in his life, he didn't care.

"Come on you stupid Polack. What are you gonna do now??"

Tony and Andy stood over him like preying animals.

"You little Guinea son of a bitch!!" Steve sprang onto Tony and pushed him to the ground. He hit him squarely on the jaw and nose a few times before Andy hit him from behind. He swung around with his elbow and hit Andy in the groin. He watched him topple to the snow writhing in pain. He then turned back to Tony and continued where he had left off. He hit him until he realized he was unconscious. Then he hit him again.

He got off of him and felt the blood run down the back of his neck from where Andy had hit him. Debbie ran over to Tony and started to cry.

"What the hell are you doing?" Jackson couldn't believe Steve had just lost his shit.

"I'm leaving. That's what I'm doing." Steve grabbed his pack and started down the hill.

"You can't leave. What are we gonna do??"

Steve turned around. "Ask Napolo when he wakes up. If he wakes up."

The snow began to stop just as the sun came peeking over the mountain. It looked like it was going to be a beautiful day. Steve knew it.

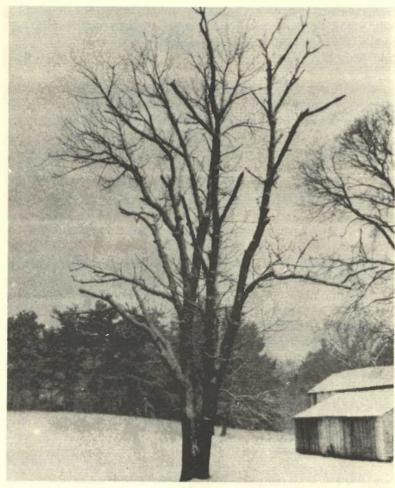


Photo by Ray Marfino

UNTITLED by Laurie Sullivan

Their color and beauty are free,
Yet captured for each tomorrow.
Their softness shines through.
Their brightness shimmers,
Offering a light of hope
When there may be none.
They always make us smile
And are there to witness
The laughter and sorrow
Which fill our days.
They offer us joy.
They listen and they hear.
And most of all
They're always there
When we need them....

Flowers that are silk

Are like friends who are specialThey last a lifetime.

#### UNTITLED by Lisa Maturo

Blue mist hover hollow hills

March to the sun?

Light came forward march

Mist hangs hollow hovering

Scores of drops line up



Photo by Ray Marfino

by Laurie Sullivan

Grayness covers the horizon
Hanging over the earth's theater
Like an old faded curtain
Waiting patiently.

It hangs in misty clouds, A despairing, depressing gray That envelops your soul Waiting silently.

Grayness moving in uncertainty
Its shadows concealing and revealing
Silent, untold mysteries,
Waiting, waiting.

A sudden burst,
A shimmering gold flame,
Burning the curtain,
Releasing your soul.
The sun is risen.
The grayness--no longer waiting.



Photo by Ray Marfino

UNTITLED
by Lisa Maturo

Mornings don't cramp me if I'm there in the grass Whisking about in your puddle puss pouts

Skating on a beach of impending breaks ( Burning down my pedastool for you isn't so easy you know)

What with your milk-silk, brothy skin and shimmering pure eyes

And deep black hair falling to your shoulders--haphazardly beautiful.

But came-fall did cramp my juvenile juices some

Can't possibly allow another bleat from that dark wet shimmering street Again

I'm wiping my gambles too much to know the dead end ahead

I'll cherish those crumbling desparate moments--always, Tim.

# THE FIRST STEP by Laurie Sullivan

Like the spring flower
That closes its petals
To the cold of the night,
I search my mind
For childhood memories
And gather them in tight.

For just as the seasons of
Spring and summer come to a close
So has my childhood ended.
To neither can I return
To the simplicity and security of easier days.
These can only be remembered.

The past is closed now
Used only as a lesson learned,
A guiding hand.
And my future looms before me
A wide expanse of dreams, goals,
And unknown land.

For though the flower
Can open its petals
To a new day's morning light
I must turn away
And open my eyes
To a future--shadowed but bright.

# JOURNEY

by Paul J. McDonald MCI Walpole

The kingdom in a tree opens its green door

where words sputter and breath rests in the branches

and it's Christmas

solitude

you fill it like an ark draws an angel to the tree and after that

nothing goes on without its opposite

creation and its mystery

lights and bells global bulbs

they say you cannot go there but already

are planets whirling around a magic staff

your soul bears

into which grief vanishes

the pollen of the passage

# A NIGHT IN THE LIFE OF. . .

by Julie Bump

Author's Note: There are some words in here that aren't "real" words. I am trying to defy discursive language.

Sporting a black hat and a duck headed cane, I cobbled through the sparkling streets of Durenham. Feeling rather eloquent, my pants wisked right along in the shadows. Paisley motifs addressed my vertical nape as silk and wool intertwined by my faculties.

Turning in sensory admiration at the corner indulgary, I caught a draft of pleasure. Not reflecting an instant but was carried inside. Sumptuousness in a bag, which lingered on my lapel. Content, invited myself along.

As before but never alike, the perplexity shuffled my thoughts. In my vision was brought a hurried gray form, blobish, smart and coniving. Was I as he to my world as his? Pondering and dismissing my scattered cranium advanced.

Admiring a chill I persved expresso. Locating lamp lit tables with miniature public abounding I circled inside. Removing my antique trench I glanced around and motioned to the window street corner. My chair was sturdy and my outer self content. The aroma lingering was not definate but rather questionable as well.

She approached, greeted and my palate became quenched. Noticing the doers under glass, I proved myself welcome. Continuous vision motion amused my thoughts although always discretely exhibited. Chat was condenced, movement was relaxed and suave, as contradicted to the rest beyond. Considering the previous daily events, retrospect of involvement to the future. I gained peace of memory with realization of determination for continuous development. Always expecting perfection and open for achievement. Good to the last drop I declined the refill and tipped my contentment. Departure turned into a final greeting with an unexpected face. Then I was back on track.

Picturing solitude and neon discourse I developed a high stepping bounce, and reclined on my heels. The mallards all tucked away as I walked beyond the millions of glistening tears. Admiring ebony silhouettes coupled together strolling above the muddy reflections below their laughter.

Steps leading to my hardwood apartment the skeleton key cut into the key hole and I was greeted by my siamese feline. A grin cracked by rain licked countenance, for the second time during my evening. I hosted a disk onto the phonograph, and ignited the burner for a cup of tea.

My peds rested on the other end of the sofa as my sence of accomplishment molded my contentment. My telephone was quiet as my purring stomach warmth heated my brain. Humming a melody of rapture I dozed off into major unconsciousness.

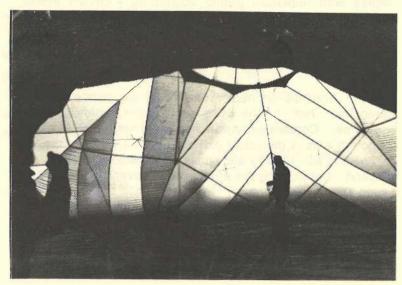


Photo by Shirley Richardson

UNTITLED by Julie Abrams

I need to be held
to be touched
to be felt
I need you there for me.

Can't you see?

You do something to me ...a quiver

...a shiver

...a glow

I look at you

...intense eye contact

...silence

...you smile, I smile

...you scare me.

To feel...what a new sensation it scares me.

I back away, close the door You go away.

# UNTITLED by Mary Indy Okoye

The pure sweet blood in my veins flow
The red blood that makes my black skin glow
My ebony color that shines in the sun
And through my veins does sweet red blood run

My grandmother told me when I was small
Do not be fooled, lift your head, stand tall
Look it will always be there that cloud,
Like you. So lift your head, stand proud

My mother called me close to thee
She told me that I would always be free
To choose in life my very own role
She advised me to achieve my ultimate goal

My grandfather, he was something great
He never believed in making things wait
And advised me to get what I wanted done
He made me believe it could be so much fun

So all my life I have taken advise
From those who care, and those so wise
From those who know what life is about
This is love without a doubt.



Art by Richard Wagner

# ELEVATOR MAN by Seth McBride

I was born in Paris during the early forties. The Nazi blitzkreig was said to be going on while my mother was in labor. It took two and a half days to free me from her arches.

The first time I was able to see day light was a good four years after my birth. Our family lived in a subterranean dwelling that was directly underneath the elevator shaft. As a young child, I would stare at the light bulb above my cage. It was smooth and round and was probably made in America. I would hear the elevator begin its trip through the many worlds which lay above my head.

At the age of four I was allowed to leave my prison, and wander into the streets of Nazi Paris. Once I was even able to see Hitler, himself. He smiled; I cried. Bombs began to fall on Paris. My mother decided not to let me leave. Security was underneath the elevator shaft for it was dangerous to let me out into that world. I was forced to spend the rest of my childhood and a good part of my teenage life in the dark rooms under the elevator shaft.

During my childhood I was not allowed many toys and the toys I was given were not sof t toys as other children's toys. They were actually quite sharp toys. My favorite was a pair of shears. I ran around trying to cut anything soft I could. When all the cutable things were cut, I would sit by the wall and jab my shears into it, always looking up at the dimly lit bulb, which seemed to never go out.

Freud says all humans have sexual drives, but when I was in my cage, I never had a sexual thought. I was content playing with my shears.

Late in my teens, I decided to cut all my hair off my head, and I did. As I was doing this a great urge came over me to try washing out my eyes with soap and water. I set myself to this task of freeing the eyes from the face. When the dimly lit bulb began to flicker as it burnt out, I was in the dark for the first time. I could not see. Having no idea what to do, somehow I

had dropped my shears, also losing my sense of control, my hands began to feel for hope, touching the cold walls around me. I came upon a small door which was never there before. With great care, I twisted the tiny knob and pulled at the way of escape. As I did this, light began to flood into both of my eyes with a crashing halt. I had begun my adult life.

With not much work for a soul to do, I decided to become an elevator man. The elevator reminded me of my childhood. All the shaarp objects came into my head as I went about my job of running the machine, which created supernatural sounds of my childhood. Now I am part of that almighty sound, delivering patrons to the almighty ground. Smiles, smiles, are all around. I'm your friendly elevator man. I bring you all around, and then back to the ground.



Photo by Shirley Richardson

#### YOU'RE IN MY THOUGHTS by Paul Clerici

I stare out the window When I want you here I think of your presence And I know you care The cool, cool breeze Filtering through the leaves I can barely hear a voice And it's yours I believe The faint sound it makes Is from your heart And I listen to it carefully For it never does stop Your deep, innocent eyes Capture me within their power Even when I'm not with you I open as does the sun hits a flower Your embrace forever instills I can feel you in my thoughts For you're always there Happy I am, it was you I sought When times seem so blue And I need you to be around I close my eyes ever so tight And reaching within, it's you I've found Through the streams and lakes Where natures awe is always there You must have been made With the sunshine and mist in the air A sense of beauty from the soul And the beauty that is seen Is rarely if ever near But is so evident at eighteen The warm touch of your hand And the glistening shadows you cast Proves the elegance you possess You're the light through the overcast I always remember one time I saw you I just froze and looked funny I bet You slowly raised your eyes to me That picture, Joann, I'll never forget.

# UNTITLED by Lisa Maturo

The sun's heating the numbness in my chest as it beats on my overhanging breath

Spirals of hollow winds sting my cheekless head

My legs ache with every quiver to the numbing step

The road freezes and dives to the dawny depth

Water zooms my nose as the dew crystalizes on the rise

Lights and things sting my welded watery eyes

Zig-zag never know how's--stepping through the grass

The wetness sinks to the blinks of bluriness

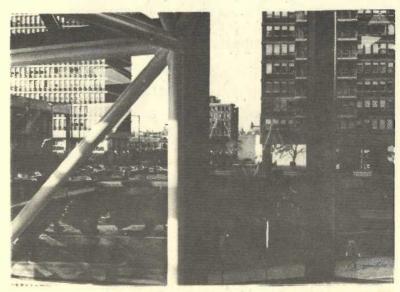


Photo by Elyse Kule

# FARAWAY IN A FOREIGN LAND by Mary Indy Okoye

Far away in Africa
Far Across the sea
Where my ancestors lived and died
And where I want to be.

I am you Africa I am you indeed For even though I live far away Inside me grows your seed.

I grew up in a foreign land, my roots here I had to lay Some people came and they my love took me far, far away I toiled and slaved in this foreign land and put all my strength to use.

And all the while I asked the Lord, why can't I live in the land I choose?

Years went by, I prayed to see my family just once more Once in a while a glimmer of light would cause my hopes to soar At night I would stare at the stars and a cold chill would go down my spine,

As I remember my home in the forest And the open spot where my family and I would dine.

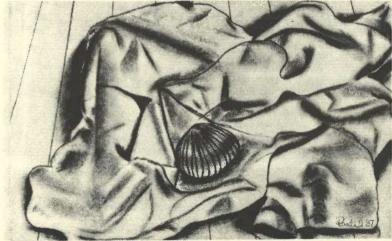
I am you Africa
I am you indeed
For even though I live far away
Inside me grows your seed.

Africa will I ever see you again
Africa most ancient beautiful land
Will I ever swim off your warm beaches or walk on your hot sand
Extend to me Africa, extend to me your great big hand.

I love you Africa, I love you with all my heart
Whenever I think of you my inside rips apart
I think of what could have been
And I think of what is now
Then I think of what I have been through and all that I have seen
So to you Africa I vow.

My children will never forget you
Nor the next to come along
I will teach them the ways of our people
And to sing the African song
I will tell them who they really are and make sure they never
forget
Even though they live in a foreign land, Africa is their home still
yet.

And when I die to my children I plead Take me back to the land I love Take my bones back home For though I lived in a foreign land In me is the African seed.



Art by Randi Birnbaum

MOM AND DAD... by Laurie Sullivan

You gave me courage
And you taught me strength.
You gave me friendship
And you showed me love.
You gave me hope
And I learned how to dream.
You gave me all these things
And you helped me to succeed!

You gave me understanding
And you taught me patience.
You gave me love
And you showed me respect.
You gave me trust
And I learned how to believe.
You gave me all these things
And helped me to become me,
A separate part of you.